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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Court officials have just released a new media policy aimed at establishing a more efficient communication mechanism for informing the media about case-related developments. The policy also sets out a structure for requesting and accommodating media adequate access to public proceedings with the least disruption to Court. The media policy is the result of collaborative work done by the Bench-Bar-Media Committee.

Presiding Judge David Rosenberg established the Bench-Bar-Media Committee as a result of feedback from the media. Recent high profile cases brought to light the need for better communication between the Court and the media. Presiding Judge Rosenberg stated "Yolo Superior Court is committed to improving access and services to the public. The Bench-Bar-Media Committee is a forum to discuss issues of mutual concern and establish best practices for cases with substantial media interest. The media policy is an important step in ensuring fair, complete and accurate reporting of case developments." There are only five such committees statewide.

Judge Janet Gaard, who chairs the committee stated, "We've made a lot of progress in this committee. There have been some spirited discussions, but in the end it has been very productive." Other members include Assistant Court Executive Officer Shawn Landry, local attorneys Frank Crum and Rich Lansburgh, as well as media representatives from several local newspapers and television networks.

Assistant Court Executive Officer Landry noted that "There is now a clear cut policy on how the media can contact the court, how requests for photographing, recording and broadcasting are handled and how the court and media respond to high profile cases. The policy was very useful, for example, during the recent case of People v. Anderson, which generated a lot of media interest. The Court was able to provide the media timely information about court proceedings and media presence at the courthouse went very smoothly."

The media policy is available on-line at www.yolo.courts.ca.gov/MediaPublicInfo/